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ABSTRACT

This newsletter contains seven articles about meaningful participation by parents, particularly Hispanic and other minority parents, in the education of their children. "Parents Reclaiming Their Schools: New Initiative Brings Parents Together for Better Schools" (Aurelio M. Montemayor) describes objectives and activities of a Texas-based coalition of organizations and schools that support parent participation in schools. "Hispanic Parents and Successful Schooling: Dispelling Misconceptions in the Information Age" (Mikki Symonds) examines four negative media portrayals of Hispanic parents in relation to education and counters them with facts and arguments. "Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Update: Parents Become Agents for Change at the 1994 National Conference" (Josie Danini Supik) depicts how conference participants--parents, students, and teachers from the 16 Valued Youth Program sites nationwide--discovered their own and each other's strengths and resources. "Moving Beyond 'de los dientes para afuera': Parental Involvement Requires Sincere Outreach" (Rogelio Lopez del Bosque) outlines school and parent factors that contribute to poor parent-school relations, and describes a successful parental involvement outreach. "Playtime Is Science: Parents and Children Have Fun Building Science Skills" (Bradley Scott) describes a program that disseminates simple hands-on science activities for parents and their children, aged 4-8. "In the Service of All Students: Schools Must Recognize Change and Respond Appropriately" (Frank Gonzales) examines the past decade's socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural changes in U.S. and Texas student populations. Also includes reflections on parents, schools, and responsibility by Sylvia Ortiz Valdez; "Why a High School Education Is Important to My Future," by Rosalinda Valdez; and a list of additional readings on parental involvement. (SV)

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INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

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IDRA Focus: Parental Involvement

Parents Reclaiming Their Schools: New Initiative Brings Parents Together for Better Schools

Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.

A year ago, IDRA received a letter from a parent of a student that had participated in our Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program (see *A Parent's Perspective* p. 12). The letter poignantly reminded us of several things: parents care about the education of their children; they respond positively to educational programs that work; programs that *value* families and students, and the voices of these parents need to be heard. IDRA is renewing and accelerating our commitment with the *Parents Reclaiming Their Schools* initiative.

IDRA has convened representatives of organizations and schools that support parents in having a more powerful voice and an effective partnership with their children's schools. These include representatives from IDRA, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) Parent Leadership Program, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), *AVANCE*, *FIESTA EDUCATIVA*, Advocacy Inc., the Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE), the San Antonio Community Education Leaders Program (CELP), and administrators from the Edgewood and South San Antonio Independent School Districts. This coalition has defined its basic assumptions, vision, goals, objectives, and specific short-term and long-term activities.

Basic Assumptions

Parents are intelligent, powerful, and want the best education possible for their children.

Vision

Parents of all socio-economic levels and all cultural groups can participate meaningfully in their children's schools. They can understand good instruction and act as a driving force for innovations that improve the education of their children. They can discuss important educational issues to achieve a common understanding of that which affects their children.

Schools can have effective and inclusive parent involvement programs. Parents can participate fully in the decision-making process at the campus, district, city, state, and national levels. Parents can have a role in determining campus and district budgets, selecting superintendents and other administrators, and choosing *what* will be taught and *how* it will be taught. State policies and resources can address authentic parent involvement through state-wide networks of parent activists. State advisory committees can have parent members from all social strata; the voice of the poor and working class parent can be strong, affect public policy and opinion, and be visible in the mass media.

Assisting Forces

In beginning to define *Parents Reclaiming Their Schools*, IDRA used a force-field analysis to structure our initial conversations. After describing our ideal through a statement of philosophy and vision, we listed those forces assisting and restraining the accomplishment of that vision.

In listing the assisting forces, one major strength is something that already exists in families: strong, positive values and a desire for education. Parents want their children to get the best education possible;

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IDRA is an independent nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to improving educational opportunity. Through research, materials development, training, technical assistance, evaluation, and information dissemination, we're helping to create schools that work for all children.

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Popularized in the early 1970s by author Thomas Kuhn, "paradigms" are our models or patterns of reality, shaped by our understanding and experience into a system of rules and assumptions about the world around us. The call for restructuring in education, emerging from a profound sense that education is not working for all children, requires a transformation in how we see schools, students, and their families. If we are to find a new and equitable vision of what education can and should be, new lenses are required to change the way we look at schools and the populations in them - as demonstrated by our "Then" and "Now" thinkers below.

THAT IS THEN... THIS IS NOW...

"Education has gotten much better. It's the students who are getting worse. The students have no home training. [Parents] are expecting the teacher to be a babysitter..."

- A respondent's comment on a Bank Street College of Education survey, November 1993

"It's up to parents, not the government, to feed the children."

- Reason cited by the San Diego Christian Coalition chapter in voting against school breakfast for poor children; made during the 1990 school board elections in which they won 52 of the 88 seats sought

"Analyses of the lack of school success of [minority groups] have emphasized the failure of the educational system to serve them...it would be more correct to point out that these pupils and their parents have also failed the schools.... because they have not made the system work for them."

- Lloyd M. Dunn in Bilingual Hispanic Children on the U.S. Mainland, 1987

"Next to Native Americans, Hispanics across the nation have the highest dropout rate in secondary schools. When then-Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos told them they should look at the low priority Hispanic parents put on education, he was booed roundly. They put all the blame on "the system".... They, too, are crybabies."

- Gerald F. Krezche in his *USA Today* article "Has America Become a Nation of Crybabies?", May 1991

"Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children."

- The National Education Goals 2000

"In large and small ways, the school needs to manifest the importance of parents' contributions and celebrate their cultural differences."

- Sylvia Glass, Principal, Southwest Elementary School, San Antonio, Texas, 1992

Meaningful parent involvement is "anything a parent does to educate a child. It can begin with lap time, simple things like asking a kid questions about what he did that day. The kid realizes, 'Hey, my parent really does care,' and that's the beginning."

- William Douglas, founder, Parents in Touch, a highly-successful parental outreach program, in a 1991 interview

"Schools filled with parents are just better schools."

- Larry Martz in his 1993 book Making Schools Better: How Parents and Teachers Across the Country are Taking Action - And How You Can, Too

Hispanic Parents and Successful Schooling: Dispelling Misconceptions in the Information Age

Mikki Symonds, M.A.

We are living in the Information Age. Over the past fifty years, our technologies have progressed so rapidly and radically that most of us barely comprehend the actual engineering required for the information we consume through electrical cables, televisions, satellites, or computer data bases and world-wide networks. Despite general ignorance of the hardware of information systems, all of us feel the effects of their operations: we collect information daily and incorporate it into our individual paradigms.

Some effects of information dissemination are more direct, even personal, than others. We may not appreciate the technology needed for companies to rapidly send us notices on overdue bills, to solicit credit card customers over the telephone at any hour of the night, or make automatic teller machines a part of the national banking system, but we certainly register these as realities that affect our lives. We also register repeated television news broadcasts on such topics as the economy and crime, as well as the various print media that support and duplicate these broadcasts, as directly affecting us. Because we understand that information influences our peace of mind and our plans for the future, we evaluate the information and make at least some decisions based on this information.

Other effects of information systems do not present themselves as immediately. The lack of attention paid to or incorrect depictions made of minority parents in relation to their children's educations in the popular media qualifies as a less obvious effect of our information age. Certainly, many Hispanic parents have recognized that how the media depicts them plays a role in their lives and the lives of their children. Individuals in the majority, however, rarely seem to link the absence of truthful representations of Hispanics and other minorities to assumptions and decisions made about such parents and their children in relation to the public schools.

Combating Misinformation About Minority Parents

This article presents quotations from popular media, juxtaposes them with statements from parents, and provides arguments that question the credibility of the popular representation of minority parents. Although the paraphrasings of common untrue assumptions about Hispanic parents are called 'myths,' these are all-too-common beliefs because few popular information sources provide images to counter them. In this case, the word 'myth' does not connote 'antiquated beliefs,' but rather 'modern misconceptions.' If allowed to perpetuate, such misconceptions or stereotypes assume truly mythical proportions in the national consciousness, ultimately influencing policy and action.

The most eloquent arguments against these myths come from two resources available at IDRA: *Families in Schools: Parents' Dialogues Towards Student Success/ Familias en las Escuelas: Un Dialogo Entre Padres Acerca del Exito de los Estudiantes* (a bilingual publication) and *Hispanic Families as Valued Partners: An Educator's Guide*.

Myth: Hispanics do not value education.

Of all the common misconceptions about Hispanic parents, the popular press most frequently publishes this: "Hispanic parents do not value education." The press depicts Hispanic parents' supposed lack of emphasis on education in a variety of ways:

1. Categorically denying Hispanics as people who value education;
2. Claiming that Hispanics will not pay taxes for public education;
3. Claiming that Hispanic parents prefer that their children work rather than attend school; and/or
4. Claiming that Hispanic families' lack of emphasis on education is evidenced by their having no books in the home.

When Lauro Cavazos headed the U.S. Department of Education, he said that Hispanics should stop blaming others for their children's poor test scores and grades and accept their own "lack of emphasis on education" as the root cause for their children's low academic performance.[1] Popular media responded by frequently repeating Cavazos' unsupported claims, and few reporters investigated the argument by talking to Hispanic parents about their views on education. As is often the case, if one minority group member makes a statement about *all* of that group's members, the majority press is apt to use the individual's opinion as a factual statement rather than seeking corroborating evidence or even the opinion of another minority group member.

In a 1990 *Newsweek* article discussing one university's plan to work with a low-income, largely-Hispanic district, the author negatively characterizes the university-community relationship by reporting that the university officials felt frustrated by the city's "refusal[2] to make a financial commitment." The city, notes the journalist, "spent 20% of its tax revenues on education; statewide, the average city expenditure is 31%."[3]

Not only are Hispanic parents unwilling to commit money to education, according to a 1989 article in *Business Week*, they also perpetuate "a culture that values one's family over individual achievement... 'Hispanic males are more likely to cite economic reasons for dropping out, helping out at home,' [said] Richard Santos, Southwest University economist."[4] These arguments suggest that Hispanic parents exhibit their less-than-enthusiastic support of education by refusing to pay for it and by valuing their child's minimum-wage income over their attaining an education.

Not only do majority reports sometimes fail to fully investigate statements about minority parents, they often miss the point entirely. Such is the case with the *Business Week* writer who misleadingly juxtaposes his sentence with Mr. Santos' statement. The author's construction gives the appearance that Santos attributes the deplorable attrition rate of Hispanic males to Hispanic culture, and thereby Hispanic parents. Santos' comment does not support the author's statement as it points out common *reasons* rather than *causes* for attrition. The writer, however, declines to explore the

[1] Cavazos, Lauro. 1990, p. 6.

[2] Words and phrases in the excerpts have been underlined by the author to emphasize diction that sensationalizes rather than clarifies or to emphasize diction that presents specific biased perceptions.

[3] Starr, Mark. 1990, p. 3.

[4] Mason, Todd. 1989, p. 151.

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causes themselves, such as the difficulties that arise when people live in poverty.

In discussing the low-paying city, the *Newsweek* journalist pointed out that the city's students were 55% Hispanic and that its minority families rarely earn more than $10,000 annually. Rather than taking into account the actual percentage of income paid in tax by each family and comparing it to that paid by citizens in more affluent areas of the state, the article negatively represents the city's Hispanic constituents as deadbeats who *refuse* to pay for education. That only 20% of the city's tax revenues is spent on education may speak more eloquently of a city running on a tight budget due to a property-poor taxbase than a pervasive lack of concern for education.

Another way popular media statements inaccurately portray minority parents is through leaps in logic like the following from a 1990 *New Perspectives Quarterly* article:

> *It is not easy for teachers to motivate students to learn if learning is not respected in the home...In contrast, if the students come principally from homes where there are books, a respect for education and learning, and reasonable expectations about how students spend their time, the salvage rate will be much higher.*[5]

Although the article goes on to call for further investment of faith and funds in public education, a worthy argument, this excerpt implies that parents who maintain homes with no books regard the work of the school with indifference. Unfortunately, this statement also can imply that most poor families do not care about education because they cannot afford to spend their meager funds on educational materials. The underlined phrase also implicitly tells the audience that poor, possibly minority parents themselves, rather than environmental or economic factors, make the "salvaging" of children a necessity.

Fact: Hispanic parents do value education.

The following comments, chosen from among the hundreds IDRA has collected from parents, testify that Hispanic parents of all economic and cultural backgrounds value education not only due to its undisputed value in increasing one's standard of living, but also for its more abstract and philosophical benefits. Were media personnel to interview Hispanic parents, they would hear similar statements conveying interest in and respect for education on a variety of intellectual levels. Moreover, were they to feature these parents' statements, the idea that valuing education as a good in itself is the sole domain of the middle and upper classes would ring false.

- *"We have suffered enough, and we do not want to see our children suffer. Without school, they will suffer. They need school. They need an education."*
- *"Is my child being prepared to deal with the pressures of life? Will my child be prepared to go on to increase his or her education if he or she wants to?"*
- *"School prepares you to become a student for the rest of your life. Be the best student you can be because we all continue to learn throughout the rest of our lives"*
- *"There was never any doubt when we were growing up that my brothers and sisters and I would go to college, even though my father had only gone to the sixth grade. [My father] worked very hard to pay our way...and I always knew he had such aspirations for me. And now my daughter has received a five-year scholarship to the University of Texas."*
- *"The purpose of a good education is two-fold: it prepares you to do something - to conceive it and carry it out - and it enables you to enjoy your humanity."*

Myth: Hispanic parents will not to talk to school personnel.

A second common misconception about Hispanic parents the popular press most frequently publishes is: "Hispanic parents are afraid of or linguistically unable to talk to school personnel."

In his 1990 *New Perspectives Quarterly* article, Lauro Cavazos stated that:

> *[p]articularly for Hispanics, there are barriers to parental participation that we must work to diminish. A Hispanic parent who speaks little or no English, for example, may be reluctant to visit school and talk to teachers about a child's performance.*[6]

This idea was 'corroborated' in a 1990 *Time* article that, in describing a parental involvement program, points to language differences as one key force that "exacerbated mounting anger and frustration."[7]

As is often the case, both articles cast parents as passive malcontents who stay home feeling "reluctant," "angry" and "frustrated" and school personnel as active proponents for involvement. Neither article, however, calls on the school to be responsible for diminishing the barriers to minority parental involvement found in public schools. Attributing the lack of communication between parents and teachers to parents' *feelings* - as opposed to very real negative school-related experiences - makes the problem appear to result from nothing more than the parents' lack of will.

Both quotations, moreover, portray speaking a language other than English as a liability. These articles also characterize people speaking different languages as inherently negative, even incendiary. Certainly in both situations more powerful blocks than language differences exist; while speaking different languages can pose challenges to communication, these challenges are not insurmountable.

Fact: Hispanic parents do want open communication with the school.

The following statements from parents debunk the idea that Hispanics are reluctant to get involved in their children's education:

- *"They have my support and I will always be available if they need to speak to me."*
- *"I expect that my children will be safe in school and I want good communication between parents and teachers."*
- *"I want to know about my children. I want to know what hopes they should have in order to graduate and have a good career."*

Myth: Hispanic parents do not take responsibility for their children's education.

A third misconception about Hispanic parents frequently reinforced by the popular media is: "Hispanic parents 'blame the system' or 'play politics' rather than take responsibility for their children's education."

In a 1991 *USA Today* editorial, Gerald Kreyche asserted:

Next to Native Americans, Hispanics

Dispelling Misconceptions - *continued on page 16*

[5] Gardner, David Pierpont. 1990, p. 6.
[6] Cavazos, Lauro. 1990, p. 7.
[7] Tifft, Susan E. 1990, p. 73.

Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Update:
Parents Become Agents for Change at the 1994 National Conference

Josie Danini Supik, M.A.

On February 13, 1987, at 11:56 in the morning I became a parent. My husband and I had prepared well for the birth of our daughter. We had practiced breathing correctly and putting diapers on the hospital doll; we had fixed up the baby's room and, most importantly, we had begun to plan for our child's future. From the moment we found out we would be parents, we became keenly aware of the legacy we would leave for our child.

As ready as we thought we were for our daughter's birth, we were totally unprepared for this life-altering experience of parenthood. As a parent, you begin to think you will never sleep through the night again, what with every-two-hour feedings and then "scary things" in the dark. You bargain with God when they're sick. "I'll do anything," you pray, "just let her be alright." You watch what you say and, more importantly, what you *do* - because you know they're watching you, too. You come to realize that you are your child's first teacher and the lessons you teach will be with them forever.

On April 7, 1994, I saw a wonderful group of parents teaching their children valuable lessons that will stay with them for as long they live. On that day, parents of Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program (VYP) students from across the country came together for the Fourth Annual National Training Seminar and Valued Youth Conference. From Billings, Montana, and the Bronx, New York, from Miami, Florida and Weslaco, Texas, the parents gathered to share their experiences and develop new strategies for improving their children's educational opportunities.

With the support of Coca-Cola USA and the Coca-Cola Foundation, one parent and one tutor from each of the sixteen VYP sites across the country participated in this year's event. None of the parents had ever met each other before. As it turned out, many had never been away from their hometowns, much less flown in an airplane.

Many of the parents who came are minority, some are immigrants, several speak a language other than English. All work very hard to earn a living for their families. Some parents gave up several days' pay to come to the conference; they felt it was *that important* for them to be there.

For three days, the Valued Youth parents discovered things about themselves, about their children, and about their schools that they had never realized before. They realized that school teachers and administrators are genuinely concerned about them. These professionals, they discovered, are part of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program because educators, too, want to leave a legacy for their students: a legacy of opportunities, high expectations, and choices. Parents also realized that teachers and administrators are their *partners* in their child's education. Prior to this conference, many parents respected the educators' authority to the extent that they never even asked their children's teachers questions, so afraid were they of being thought disrespectful.

The conference challenged many of the parents' other preconceived notions. One such challenge came when parents presented at the conference's Plenary Session. They had worked together all one morning to prepare collages of their experiences with the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program. As they assembled in front of the one hundred or so visitors, parents who had never spoken publicly moved people to tears as they spoke of their aspirations for their children.

As I watched these parents speak to the group, I also watched the reactions of their children and the other visitors. As the parents spoke movingly and eloquently, their children and the visitors were transfixed. Many of the students rushed to take pictures, boasting, "*¡Es mi Mamá!*" or "*¡Es mi Papá!*"

The parents' message was so powerful that it transcended language. Some of the parents spoke only in Spanish, yet visitors who did not understand the language were as moved as those who did. Their message was simple, direct, and heartfelt. They reaffirmed their commitment to their children's future through education: "*Lo que aprendí que la llave del éxito, es la educacion.* [I learned that the key to success is education]." They spoke proudly of their cultural heritage and of their unparalleled support for their children. One parent pledged she would be "giving [her son] more support and more love as a mother." "And believe me," she said, "it comes from my heart because I love my son very much."

The parents also spoke directly to the students, expressing their pride in their children's successes as valued youth. They spoke of the perils of raising children, the responsibilities, hopes and aspirations all parents share. The children, in turn, saw things in their parents that many had never seen before. They realized that their parents were proud, vulnerable, loving, and courageous.

This conference became a forum for recognizing the strengths that people possess, but may not recognize in themselves. Parents realized how their commitment and love can propel them into action; students realized what a powerful and positive force their parents can be; teachers and administrators realized what tremendous resources exist within parents and students.

Another challenge to preconceived ideas came as parents attended sessions on bilingual education, school accountability, and school "choice." Some had not explored these issues, thinking they were too complex to understand. The parents emerged from the discussions with profound, new understandings not only of the issues currently facing their children and the schools, but of their own power to make their voices heard and create schools that work for their children.

As families were recognized at the closing luncheon, it was clear that personal transformations had taken place. We'd all been a part of something that transcended that moment and would change permanently the way we look at students, families and education. It reminded me of the life-altering experience of becoming a parent. One day you see things a certain way and the next day, everything is different: goals are clearer, priorities are straight, you know what is truly important in your life.

The parents and students who attended made this year's conference very special. They reminded all who worked with them of the truly important things in life: children and their future. To each of them we say, "We will never forget you!"

Josie D. Supik is the Director of the Division of Research and Evaluation. She oversees the Coca-Cola VYP, working with the program director to insure its continued success.

Moving Beyond "de los dientes para afuera:" Parental Involvement Requires Sincere Outreach

Rogelio López del Bosque, M.Ed.

While working with one of the largest school districts in the nation, I ran into a top administrator who had just arrived from a visit to a local elementary school. She was wearing a full length plastic apron. Aprons remind me of my upbringing, my mother, and generally of things very dear, so in my excitement at seeing the full length apron, I assumed that she had worn it to work with the children on some type of project or demonstration lesson requiring paints, glue, or other messy substance that makes for a wonderful time for children.

"What did you do?" I asked her, a little enviously. "Did you work with clay, glue, paint? Did you make something great?"

Her response surprised me. "Oh, I just did a lesson with the little ones" she said, removing the apron. "I always wear this because I don't like for them to touch me - you know how kids are..."

This was one of those situations which we call in Spanish "*de los dientes para afuera*" (literally, "from beyond the teeth" indicating that a smile, a seemingly friendly action, is false). Although the administrator could talk for hours about the unlimited potential of her district's students and the need for teachers to work closely with them, she didn't walk her talk - at least not unless she was protected by several yards of washable plastic.

Unfortunately, I see districts take this same approach with parents. Protected by regulations and busy schedules, educators too often smile the false smile and avoid what really needs to be done to make parents a working part of the system. Schools can no longer be insincere in efforts to work with people. A false welcome will not make parents a part of the school. Only a sincere effort at outreach will encourage parents to get involved.

Why parental involvement?

As the burgeoning problems in society continue to have profound effects on schools across the country, administrators have begun to seek true means to address the need to strengthen the family, the school, and the community. Parental involvement, they've found, brings parents and children together and enhances the school (Robledo Montecel, et al., 1993). When parents and children learn together, children gain respect for education, paving the way for school success, and parents acquire new skills for work and home activities while developing an appreciation of their roles as their children's first teachers. Through school involvement, parents can form community networks that help them cope with and overcome environments hostile to their success as learners and teachers.

Encouraging Parental Involvement

Public schools in the United States have a history of negative relations with parents, particularly those who are poor, minority, recent immigrant, or homeless. These parents see education as a critical means of improving their lives and that of their children. They tend, however, to be perceived by school personnel as passive, lazy, unconcerned, and/or uncaring, due primarily to the schools' inappropriate - and, therefore, largely unsuccessful - attempts at outreach.

If families are to become more involved in schools, it is important that educators understand the unsatisfactory circumstances that currently exist between schools and parents.

School to Parent Factors

In too many districts, the relationships between schools and parents are strained or absent. The following describes a number of factors that exist on the school side that contribute to poor school-parent relations:

1. Many schools have language and cultural expectations incompatible with those of the targeted parents. In Texas, many faculty members speak little or no Spanish. Often, teachers assume that they are working with children from middle class homes, where everyone is at least orally proficient in English, and the child has the resources of a fully literate family and the support needed to fulfill the first three levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Montemayor, et al., 1989).
2. Schools have typically exhibited little empathy for families in home conditions that are not middle class. Home conditions may include severe economic needs, lack of a permanent home, health and nutrition problems, and other critical conditions faced by a family living at a subsistence or survival level.

   In some cases, parents are directly and indirectly made to feel that they are not welcome on the campus, that they are the sole cause of the unacceptable academic or behavioral performance of their children, and that they are ultimately responsible for the dire economic conditions they face. These families are told overtly or covertly that there is only a limited future for the academic performance of their children, and by implication, for their future economic security (Guzman, et al., 1989).
3. In many cases, schools contact parents only for negative reasons, (e.g., the student is failing academically or is behaving unacceptably). Rarely do schools have proactive outreaches and activities that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, nor is the norm one in which school personnel view the poor or language-minority family with dignity and respect (Chavkin, 1989).
4. Some principals maintain a closed-door policy with parents, making teachers reluctant to communicate unnecessarily with the home such as to relate the positive accomplishments of a child (Montemayor et al., 1989).
5. Most schools inform parents about policy, procedures, and organizational matters in middle-class jargon. The assumption is that the family is literate in English, that the primary means of communication is the written word, and that the family has the academic background to understand any communication from the school. When poor or minority parents are asked to participate, it is often for menial, demeaning tasks or as part of a fund-raising effort. Parents that are inquisitive and assertive are seen as a problem for the school (Dauber & Epstein, 1991).

Some other causes for poor school-

Sincere Outreach *- continued on page 7*

Sincere Outreach - continued from page 6

parent relationships are even more deeply-seated than the behaviors listed above. They relate to negative paradigms or institutional assumptions perpetuated within the school. These erroneous assumptions have been described and dispelled by the following authors:

Erroneous Assumption #1: The Deficit Model

"If there is a problem in school," the Deficit Model says, *"it's because there is something wrong with the child and child's family"* (Cárdenas, 1990).

Erroneous Assumption #2: Language Bias

"English is the correct and socially-acceptable language of the school and if the child and the family aren't proficient in English, it is the problem of the child and of the family" (Montemayor et al., 1989).

Erroneous Assumption #3: Low Expectations

"There is little hope for- and therefore not much reason for educators to try to educate - the children of families who are economically disadvantaged, ethnic minority, without permanent shelter, limited-English-proficient or illiterate, mobile, and/or recent immigrants" (Berlin & Sum, 1988).

Erroneous Assumption #4: Remediation

"Students who are diagnosed 'slow,' limited in English, intelligence, or ability cannot comprehend the standard curriculum and cannot achieve the standard objectives; therefore," says the Remediation paradigm, *"these students must be taught simplistically, with lower cognitive levels of information, and a watered-down curriculum. Parents should accept the wisdom of the school in providing such dumped-down, force-fed instruction* (Donato, et al., 1991).

Erroneous Assumption #5: At-Risk Schools

"Schools in poor neighborhoods or in urban-blight areas are just too heavy a cross to bear for educators since they are the dumping grounds for 'bad' (poor and minority) students. Should any gifted and talented minority students surface, they should be moved to a magnet school or other more desirable campus. These schools deserved their limited resources because they are physically dangerous, drug-infested, gang-ridden, spiritually-draining, and generally hopeless hell-holes. Families and the surrounding communities don't care about the school and are a major cause of its problems" (Ramírez & Robledo, 1987).

Parents to School Factors

Relationships between schools and parents may also be strained by factors on the parents' side:

1. Many parents have had negative experiences with their own schooling. They sometimes perceive themselves as academic failures and are reluctant to connect with the school because the interaction brings back so many unhappy memories.
2. Parents may feel anger and frustration with school because, on the one hand, they see education as a crucial means of helping their children prepare for a better future, but on the other hand, they face institutional rigidity, negativity and accusations.
3. Parents that have limited formal education may tend to be shy when confronting complex school procedures, organizational patterns, and rules/regulations.
4. Even assertive and informed parents are sometimes reluctant to confront school personnel about their children's unmet educational needs or violated rights due to the fear of negative consequences for their children.
5. Parents that speak a language other than English and aren't proficient in English, or are embarrassed about their accent, may appear shy, passive, non-communicative, uninvolved and/or uncaring.
6. Recent immigrant families live in special fear of deportation and under the constant embarrassment of being judged 'alien.'
7. Families that have no permanent home may feel schools are judging them as 'inferior.' They feel demeaned as human beings when the school interprets not having a home as indicating something about their value as persons.

Encouraging Involvement

Research shows that training can overcome the factors negatively impacting school-parent relationships. Educator training usually takes the form of half-day or day-long workshop sessions, while parent training sessions can be incorporated into almost any group function that tends to increase participation and retention of parents in school-related activities. Parent training sessions provide opportunities for parents not only to network with school personnel and other parents, but to share experiences, successes and concerns that affect the quality of education that their children are receiving.

To be successful, these sessions must provide an environment of trust and mutual respect, acceptance and understanding, as well as a forum in which parents can discuss issues of mutual interest. Further, parent participation in group activities can become an important vehicle for enhancing parents' self-confidence, communication and problem-solving skills. In order to prepare all parents for a successful educational experience, however, *every* parent must be reached. It is essential that schools be especially receptive to the needs of minority, limited-English-proficient, poor, and homeless parents when conducting outreach activities.

A Case Study in Parental Involvement Outreach

Mrs. Felipa Young, principal of Rusk Elementary School in Houston, Texas, asked IDRA to help her conduct an outreach and training activity to improve the school-parent relationship on her campus. In order to reach all the parents, her staff initiated a massive campaign. Two meetings were set up in order to meet the working schedules of the parents. Notes and letters were sent and phone calls were made in both English and Spanish for two months prior to the scheduled parent meetings. The guest speakers were announced and parents were informed that presentations would be in both languages. Teachers and students were given prizes for having the greatest parents' response.

The day of the meetings, door prizes, a free babysitting service, and refreshments were available for all parents and family members. Sessions were held in the morning and repeat sessions were conducted in the afternoon and evening. The campaign had called for a big commitment on the part of the teachers, administrators, and area office personnel. The results of this massive campaign and all the efforts for the staff was 70 to 80 parents showing up for each meeting. Although the total school population of parents was not represented, it was a great improvement from the 5 to 10 parents who tended to show up for previous parent activities.

Each meeting was kept to no more than one and one half hours, including breaks. The parents were welcomed and informed of how important their contributions were in the education of their

Sincere Outreach - continued on page 8

Sincere Outreach - continued from page 7

children and the progress of the school. The school staff proceeded to ask the parents about their needs, desires and expectations in terms of the school's performance. In a shy and very courteous manner, the parents informed the school that they mostly wanted to help their children succeed. They asked for training that would help them to work more effectively with their children and the school. The parents in both sessions requested the following areas of training:

1. Techniques for motivating their children and how to speak to them positively;
2. Methods for disciplining their children at home;
3. Ideas for games and activities that could be used at home to reinforce skills being taught at school;
4. How to communicate more effectively with the school, in particular with their children's teachers; and
5. The meaning of Chapter 1, TAAS scores, and other related information.

After they prioritized their needs, the parents worked with the school personnel to determine dates and times for future meetings. The dates were selected very quickly and enthusiastically along with the time and place. The next meeting saw an even greater turnout as all the original attendees had made commitments to bring their spouses or neighbors.

The outreach process seemed tedious to the school staff, but it worked. Parents commented that they had never been treated with such respect and that they were glad that information was being made available to them in both English and Spanish. They said they felt like they belonged in the school as a result of the meetings.

Since the parents identified areas of need future interventions will consist of a series of targeted training sessions. Workshops for parents will include a process that asks parents what they think, dignifies their answers, and encourages involvement and true leadership. Concurrent staff training sessions will provide school administrators and teachers with information regarding the needs of parents to create a school context that accepts parents and involves them in meaningful tasks. Additional expected outcomes of the sessions include:

- A network will be established to disseminate information about social service agencies and providers that would increase the social, economic, nutritional, health, and other 'safety-net' services for these families;
- Teachers will be supported in terms of their own self renewal while at the same time allow them to see the strengths the parents bring to school regardless of background;
- The use of tools and processes that are culturally and linguistically appropriate in dealing with parents as peers and valued partners will be encouraged; and
- A determination will be made of whether perceptions of parents toward teachers and of teachers toward parents are improved and how these perceptions affect the children.

The final very important component in this process is the evaluation. In making the commitment to this outreach process and expending so much energy to make it successful, the school personnel need to evaluate their work and its outcomes to make an informed decision about its continuation. Periodic checks, as well as a summative evaluation conducted at the end of the process or the year, will let everyone know how well their hard work and dedication - and willingness to shift to a new, inclusive paradigm about parents - paid off.

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IDRA Multifunctional Resource Center To Host OBEMLA Regional Meeting

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) will hold a series of regional meetings to address the recently enacted *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* and the pending re-authorization of Title VII programs.

Officials from the Department of Education will use the meetings to gauge public opinion around the development of regulations and application requirements for both federal programs. This will offer state and local education agencies, public school and university personnel, community organizations, and parents an opportunity to ask questions and voice their concerns about how school reform can best be structured to be responsive to the needs of language-minority students.

San Antonio, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami and Seattle will be the sites of regional meetings. **The San Antonio meeting will be hosted by the IDRA Multifunctional Resource Center - Service Area 9 on June 20, 1994, at the Institute of Texan Cultures, Hemisfair Plaza.**

Additional information about the meetings will be mailed by OBEMLA to educators across the country. For meeting times and other information concerning the San Antonio meeting, call Dr. Adela Solís or Mr. Aurelio Montemayor in the IDRA MRC at 210/684-8180.

Playtime Is Science:
Parents and Children Have Fun Building Science Skills

Bradley Scott, M.A.

Hands-on *Playtime Is Science* Activities

At the heart of *Playtime Is Science* are fascinating hands-on physical science experiences. Using inexpensive, readily-available materials (such as plastic bottles, measuring cups, food coloring, cornstarch, etc.) children discover just how fun and intriguing the world of science can be. Some *Playtime Is Science* activities include:

Creating a Mystery Bottle — children mix water, food coloring, and vegetable oil in a clear bottle, and see for themselves the truth of the old saying that oil and water don't mix.

Building with Wonderful Junk — using "trashables" like cardboard cartons, paper towel rollers, gift wrapping, and other household materials, children create a structure that's as tall as it can be, while figuring out how to make it stand on its own.

Oobleck: Solid or Liquid? — parents or teachers help children explore the properties of a special *discrepant* substance (a substance having properties of both a solid and a liquid) named for a magic mixture in a Dr. Seuss book and created using cornstarch, water and green food coloring.

Go with the Flow: Making and Using Sieves — With the help of sieves they've made themselves, children observe and experiment with various properties of water.

Discovering How it Works — children dismantle, examine and learn to reassemble the parts of simple, safe machines like plant misters and food grinders.

Bubble Science — children invent their own bubble makers using pipe cleaners, straws, string, and other household items, then use them to discover how water molecules are attracted to each other, a process called *cohesion*.

Playtime Is Science was created to help give all children - regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, disability, or income level - equal access to the study of science. Geared to children four through eight years old, the program revolves around a series of simple, fun hands-on activities which parents and children can do together in the classroom or the home. *Playtime Is Science* stresses that, through their own life experiences, parents have learned more science than they may realize and can play an important role in getting children excited about science. Parents need only encourage their children to question, wonder, and experiment - in short, to start *thinking* like scientists.

Targeting the Need

The demand for this kind of program is particularly pressing. The National Science Foundation has estimated that by the year 2010, the U.S. will have nearly a one-million person shortage of trained scientists and technicians. Although this is a startlingly high number, we should not find it too surprising when we consider that the majority of children in schools - particularly female, minority, poor and physically challenged students - often receive inadequate instruction in science subjects. These youngsters represent a vast, heretofore untapped pool of talent. Efforts to ensure that *all* children develop competence in science and technology must be broadened to ensure continued U.S. competitiveness in the global marketplace.

Playtime Is Science and Parents

Increasing young children's exposure to science in the classroom is one way of tackling the problem, but *Playtime Is Science* also recognizes that parents have enormous influence on a child's attitude towards education. Parents are children's first teachers; they are role models in development. A mounting body of evidence has found that students whose parents participate in their education achieve more, and have better attitudes towards school. *Playtime Is Science* has been specifically designed to increase parents' confidence about encouraging their children's interest in science.

Playtime Is Science recognizes, too, that it's important for children to get early grounding in basic science skills, so that these skills become something both girls and boys can take for granted. Through play experiences, young children can begin to develop the thought processes crucial to later facility in science study and careers.

As they work on the activities together, parents help their children develop vital higher order thinking abilities, along with the self-confidence needed to confront and think through new situations and to test out assumptions through trial-and-error. Among specific skills the program develops are creative thinking, problem solving, visual-spatial abilities, and decision-making skills, as well as experience in communicating and cooperating with others.

Playtime Is Science and the DACs

Developed by the New York City-based non-profit organization Educational Equity Concepts, *Playtime Is Science* was first piloted bilingually eight years ago in Community School District 9, Bronx, New York. Today, the program has been implemented in more than 65 schools, in ten districts throughout New York City (NYC). The annual *Playtime Is Science* newsletter links those locally involved with the program, allowing them to share ideas, anecdotes, and responses to the program.

Playtime Is Science *- continued on page 17*

In the Service of All Students: Schools Must Recognize Change and Respond Appropriately

Frank Gonzales, Ph.D.

When I was going to school during the 1940s and 50s in the rural, panhandle plains region of Texas, there were no parent involvement programs associated with the public school educational process. Interactions between my parents and the school were virtually nonexistent. My mother delivered me to the care of my first grade teacher on my first day of school. In her accented and limited English, she provided the registration information and in her fluent Spanish she assured me that I would be safe, that I would have fun with my new friends and that I would learn new things, one of which would be English. My father never stepped foot on school property until the evening I graduated from eighth grade. Both of my parents donned their best Sunday attire to witness their son receiving a certificate of achievement and a special award for perfect attendance. During seven of the eight years, I had not missed a day of school; only a second grade case of the chicken pox prevented me from having perfect attendance.

During my high school years, both of my parents would attend plays and parent/son banquets in which I was involved. I did not participate in athletics; consequently neither of them ever attended a football or basketball game. My parents were supportive of my involvement in school. Like so many Hispanics, they felt that the educational process was best left up to the school. They did not question anything the school did; they simply sent me to school to learn and expected the school to teach me.

Things were much simpler then. Simpler, however, does not mean that things were equitable. African Americans did not attend school in my district; they attended segregated schools located in "colored town." Hispanics had a 90% dropout rate in my district. No effort was made to enroll the children of seasonal workers. Spanish-speaking children who stayed after the harvest season experienced the "sink or swim" approach to education. My brothers and I were the first Hispanics to "swim" long enough to make it through high school. The Cabrera kids followed us in the late 1950s and early 1960s. However, the Tijerina kids, the Martínez kids, the Ochoa kids and many, many more "sank" in the educational system of that era.

I was in high school when *Brown v. Board of Education* was decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. It would be years before that decision would have any effect in my school district. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 allowed at least physical entrance to the school district for African Americans; however, the linguistically different Hispanic continued to "sink." Society changed more than the educational system was willing to change during the 1960s and 1970s.

Since my high school experience, there has been enormous societal change yet most schools function in a similar manner as they did thirty years ago. They have maintained the same value systems that they had prior to the changes that occurred in our society and continue to operate as if everything were the same. There are three major changes that the educational system must address. These are: (1) socioeconomic changes of the student population; (2) linguistic changes in the home; and (3) cultural changes of students' families.

Socioeconomic Changes

The public school system functions out of a middle class world-view. The operation of most schools reflects a middle class value system. Most faculty members have middle class backgrounds. The curriculum and instructional materials validate and reinforce a middle class way of life. Families that are not middle class have little in common with schools that do not make an attempt to meet the needs of lower socioeconomic families.

The average family income in 1989 in Texas was $27,016 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1990). The average income for a family of four persons considered at poverty level was $12,674. The average family in Texas had at least twice as much income as a family at poverty level. Schools must realize that a family's income level makes a difference in how the family can and does interact with the school. Middle-income families provide school supplies for their children, participate in book fairs, provide treats for their children's classrooms, request teacher conferences, and generally feel comfortable interacting with the school due to their level of education and income status.

Parents of poverty-level income families, on the other hand, may not be able to provide any of the "frills" for their children and may feel uncomfortable approaching the school because of their own low educational achievement or prior negative encounters with the education system.

The middle class value system places the greatest emphasis on long-range goals. The school reinforces this concept with its goals and objectives approach to teaching and its operation of the campus or the district. Every first grade teacher has said to students, "In twelve years, you are going to graduate." Every administration has said, "At the end of five years, we will..." Long-range planning is an effective way of meeting goals in any organization and middle class families easily relate to the process. Low socioeconomic class families, however, may not relate to the process at all since their very existence is based on short-range goals. Immediate needs are often so monumental there can be no consideration of long-range goals. They may be unable to relate to actions taken in the present that will not culminate in a positive outcome until some future time.

The differences between the socioeconomic levels can also be seen in preferred means of communication. The school functions on the basis of *verbal* communication. The teacher says: "Tell me what you see." The counselor says: "Tell me what you feel about..." The administrator says: "Tell me what you think about..." (Sue & Sue, 1990). Minority groups and low income families often rely on *action* as the basis of communication. They are action-oriented and seldom verbalize their feelings

***Recognize Change** - continued on page 11*

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or thoughts to anyone outside of the family (Sue & Sue, 1990). The mere presence of such a parent on school property can be more significant than the most eloquent speech of support.

There are 701,826 households in Texas where the mother is the single parent of children under 18 years of age; this accounts for sixteen percent of the 4,343,878 families in Texas with children under 18 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1990). When single parents or both married parents work, children are often left alone before and after school hours. It is estimated that 40% of all children below grade nine are "latch-key children" (Children's Defense Fund, 1989). Schools that do not make any concessions for working parents and extended care services are not addressing the changes that have occurred in today's homes.

Linguistic Changes

There has always been linguistic diversity in Texas. The Native American tribes each had their own language and Spanish has been spoken in Texas since the 1600s. During the 1800s French, German, Dutch, Czech and English-speaking immigrants arrived. In *Language Characteristics and Schooling in the Unites States, A Changing Picture: 1979 and 1989* (1993), the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) estimated the number of persons who spoke languages other than English at home was at an all-time high.

In 1989, about 12% of the total population fell into the category; of the 225,601,000 people who were five years or older counted in the data, 24,837,000 reported speaking a language other than English (NCES, 1993). There were 14.5 million Spanish speakers, 1.1 millions French speakers, 906,000 Italian speakers, 849,000 German speakers, 834,000 Chinese speakers, 662,000 Czech speakers, 638,000 Philippine language speakers, 503,000 Korean speakers and numerous other language groups with less than one-half million speakers (NCES, 1993). Further, the number of persons who spoke a language other than English at home increased by about 40%, from 9% of the population in 1979 to about 12% in 1989 (NCES, 1993). The figure above right shows the changes in language groups in just one decade, while the figure below right provides the changes in numbers of school age children in this group during the same time period.

Contrary to popular opinion most non-English speakers are not recent immigrants. Almost half (48.1%) of all persons who speak languages other than English at home and one quarter (25%) of all persons reporting difficulty speaking English were born in the fifty states or the District of Columbia, while an additional 4% were born in Puerto Rico or other U.S. outlying areas.

Most school systems have made little or no effort to involve linguistically different parents in instructional or policy-making activities. In fact, the only consistent efforts that most schools make to engage this parent group is related to student discipline or school regulations. Often, linguistically different parents are even discouraged from participating when no one in the school office speaks their language. To expect linguistically different parents to bring their own translator or to personally seek out some other school employee to translate are unacceptable alternatives to a problem that schools must address.

Cultural Changes

American society has undergone enormous cultural change in the past three de-

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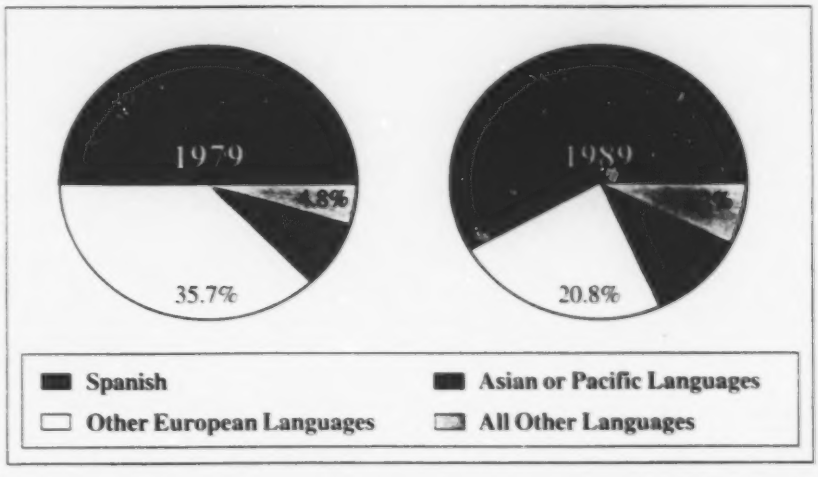
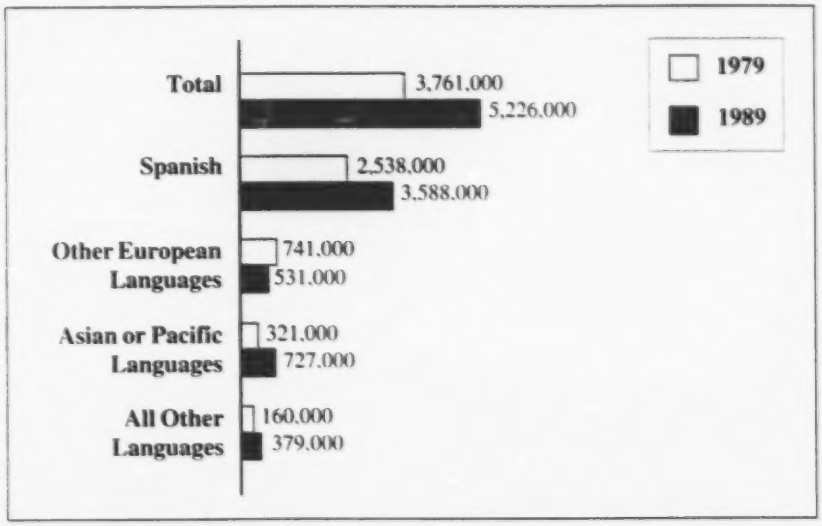
Language Spoken by Persons 5 Years Old and Over Who Speak a Home Language Other than English



Language Characteristics of Children 5-17 Years Old Who Speak a Home Language Other than English



Adapted from: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. (1979; 1989). *Current Population Surveys*. Washington DC: Author.

Recognize Change *- continued from page 11*

cades. Our world has grown smaller since the advent of Sputnik. We have become aware of the ways people around the globe live. This has provided us with alternative ways of behavior, thinking and living. The United States is a multiracial/multiethnic and multicultural group of people. Within American society, groups tend to function similarly in many ways while at the same time maintaining distinctive cultural and life-style mores that set them apart.

Cultural diversity exists in cities and towns across the United States. Cultural diversity does not become a problem for most majority group members until they are confronted with significant numbers of "different" people. Twenty-five of the largest cities in the United States have populations of 50% or more that are culturally different (U.S. Census Bureau, 1990). The school age population in Texas is a minority-majority population. Of the 3,535,742 students that were enrolled in Texas' schools during 1992-1993, 48% are White, 35% are Hispanic, 14% are African American, and 2% are classified as 'other' (TEA, 1993). The majority (52%) of the students in Texas come from homes in which a minority culture is predominant.

The school operates on the mores of the majority population. Central office and campus administrators are overwhelmingly White. Of the 219,338 teachers who were employed during 1992-93, 77% were White, 14% were Hispanic, and 8% were African American. Texas has an educational process for minority students that is largely run by majority group members who may or may not be sensitive to the cultural differences of their students.

The middle class culture of the school stresses individual performance and responsibility whereas the culturally-different home may stress group or family-oriented performance and responsibility; some homes may emphasize a sense of 'peoplehood' or a cooperativeness with nature and the universe (Sue & Sue, 1990). While the majority culture values the nuclear family, other cultures value extended families.

Schools often set aside a day, a week or a month as a time for cultural exploration. Consequently, minority students receive cultural reinforcement only during *Cinco de Mayo, Tet Trung Thu*, Chinese New Year, and Black History Month. During the remainder of the school year they are bombarded with the dominant culture with virtually exclusive exposure to the contributions that White culture has contributed to the American mosaic or tapestry.

Conclusion

Society has changed since I was in school. We did not have the federally-funded programs of LBJ's Great Society. We did not have the problems with drugs in schools that exists today. We did not have violence and gang activity on campuses to the degree that we experience it today. We did not have the economic differentiation between wealth and poverty as we have today.

Nor did we not have the racial and ethnic diversity of students as we enjoy today. We did not have the numbers of students who speak languages other than English, and we did not have the privilege of practicing another culture and life-way openly at school and in the community.

Today, more people live in the U.S. than ever before. We have a population that is linguistically diverse and multicultural. We have a young minority-majority population. And, unfortunately, we have a school system that is slow to recognize what is happening and is reluctant to change. To operate schools as they have existed for decades is unthinkable. Schools must consider the socioeconomic differences between the school and the homes of its students. Schools must meet the linguistic needs of its students and their parents. And schools must recognize the cultural difference the students bring from their homes as valuable contributions to the education of all students.

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A Parent's Perspective

"Por medio de la presente quiero hacer llegar a usted mis mas sinceras felicitaciones por participar en un programa tan valioso para nuestra juventud.

"Soy una madre infinitamente agradecida por la manera que este programa ayudó a mi hija. Aprendió muchas cosas importantes que serán de mucha utilidad en su vida futura, además tuvo cambios muy positivos en su personalidad, su casa, su familia y sus estudios.

"Me siento tranquila porque haber estado dentro del programa durante dos años le ha dado una motivación muy grande para seguir adelante; y estoy muy segura de que no deja la escuela hasta que se convierta en una persona bien preparada para su beneficio propio y de su comunidad."

[Through this letter I want to convey my most sincere congratulations for participating in a program so valuable to our youth.

I am a mother who is infinitely grateful for the way in which this program helped my daughter. She learned many important things which will be of great use in the future, and she also went through many positive changes in personality, in her home, her family and her studies.

I feel at ease because her participation in this program for two years has greatly motivated her to continue forward; and I am very sure that she will not leave school until she has become a person who is well prepared for her own benefit and that of her community.]

Translation by Aurelio Montemayor, M.Ed., and Abelardo Villarreal, Ph.D.

Reclaiming Schools - continued from page 1
parents care about their children. Students, too, are key information resources and can form student support groups that provide a way of being heard.

Other assisting forces include the knowledgeable persons who are willing to share information and support parents, as well as the many individuals and groups committed to parental participation. Across Texas and the nation many community groups and organizations are actively working with families to increase participation, support advocacy, and increase parental leadership in education. Models of effective parent participation and leadership exist. Private foundations and organizations have recognized the need for parent involvement and are providing support for parent participation.

Within the educational system itself, an assisting force is that schools offer more to children and parents now than in previous generations. Programs such as bilingual education, where implemented effectively, offer new hope to families. Information also exists about alternatives to dysfunctional school practices (such as the use of corporal punishment and the inappropriate special education classification of children) and administrators are beginning to open up to parental involvement and welcome family participation.

Restraining Forces

The restraining forces or barriers to achieving the vision of *Parents Reclaiming Their Schools* include factors within schools, within the media, and among parents themselves.

Perhaps the most difficult challenges lie with the schools. Far too many educational institutions remain closed to parents due to professional insecurity, lack of time for parents and/or educators' reliance on class distinctions - especially parents' socioeconomic status and previous educational experience - as a method of determining appropriate participation.

Other restraining forces in schools include:

- Supportive words without actions from school administrators;
- Negative campus atmospheres that reject rather than welcome parents;
- Insensitivity to minority student and parent experiences and needs;
- School-home interaction schedules inconvenient for working parents;
- Site-based decision making teams with only token or no parent involvement;
- Distracting 'turf battles' and territoriality within schools and districts;
- Lack of district-wide committees or lack of parent participation in such committees; and
- Abuse of students in schools including the officially-sanctioned use of corporal punishment.

A particularly difficult challenge lies with popular culture. Media bashing of parents and schools, especially minority and recent immigrant families, has become commonplace (see *Hispanic Parents and Successful Schooling: Dispelling Misconceptions in the Information Age*, page 3).

PARENTS CARE ABOUT THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN; THEY RESPOND POSITIVELY TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS THAT WORK.

Some additional restraining forces lie with parents themselves. These include:

- Misinformation/misconceptions/lack of information among parents about how the school system operates and their rights within it;
- Perceived shyness or lack of self-confidence in an educational setting;
- Parents disenfranchised from the system;
- Lack of supportive laws, policies, and practices;
- Parent separateness and isolation from each other due to conflicts or cultural/language differences;
- Lack of meeting space, time, and resources to do something.

Objectives

After reviewing the assisting and restraining forces, the group developed the following objectives to provide guidance for action in the *Parents Reclaiming Their Schools* initiative. The following objectives, listed here sequentially, are to be pursued concurrently:

1. Develop a cadre of parent leaders who can advocate locally, statewide, and nationally for their children;
2. Assist parents in setting goals, solving problems, developing action plans, and assessing progress in improving the education of their children;
3. Train school personnel to involve parents as decision-makers at the campus and district level;
4. Identify, document, and disseminate information about parent problems, concerns, and issues;
5. Form a coalition of parent advocacy organizations to nurture and enable parent leadership to speak out at the city, state, and national level;
6. Work to improve school and media perceptions of parent participation.
7. Help schools develop parent involvement programs where parents participate in the school at all levels;
8. Create publications, pamphlets, and handouts for parents to explain their rights, school procedures, and other vital information; and
9. Establish and support the availability and accessibility of information bases about educational services, opportunities, and post-secondary education tailored to meet parents' needs.

Activities

To meet the objectives set for *Parents Reclaiming Their Schools*, an array of activities are proposed. Some of these activities have already been or are being conducted:

- Sponsor community forums to address parent concerns (such as drop-out rates, low student achievement, and in-school discipline issues);
- Conduct focused group interviews with parents to pinpoint areas of need;
- Develop Public Service Announcements and disseminate press releases containing information parents need;
- Conduct parent leadership training sessions;
- Involve high school and college students in parent activities;
- Organize annual city-wide conferences presented by and for parents; and
- Create private and public settings in which parents can speak and be heard.

Conclusion

As the *Parents Reclaiming Their Schools* coalition continues to formalize and expand its work, more organizations and groups will be invited to participate. This loose network will not become a new organization, but will remain an association of participating organizations sharing infor-

Reclaiming Schools - continued on page 15

REFLECTIONS

Sylvia Ortiz Valdez

PARENTS, SCHOOLS AND RESPONSIBILITY

My first memories of my early childhood education are from when I was about six years old attending an elementary school in Michigan. My school peers would make fun of me because of my Spanish accent, my brown color skin, my straight brown hair, my migrant family. They would ask me questions like, "Will you do an Indian dance for us?" "What tribe do you belong to?" The school administrators often called my mother for parent conferences because I fought with the other children during recess. I remember going home to my mother crying and telling her how I was being treated. She would reply, "Don't pay attention to them, don't let them cheat you out of a good education. No matter who you are, you deserve the best education they have to offer."

After several years of traveling to the northern states and then back to Texas, my parents realized that migrating was not helping me academically. My mother stressed the importance of my education to my father, so my father learned plumbing and got a steady job in San Antonio. My mother always spoke about the importance of education. When I reached the age of 17 my mother had a stroke and passed away. Three months later, I became a dropout statistic. After several years and four children, my early marriage dissolved. At the age of 31, I began attending parenting classes at a San Antonio agency. There I learned that I - not the teacher in their pre-kindergarten classroom - was the *first* and *most important* teacher that my children would ever have. I realized that only by *my* example, they would learn the importance of a high school education. At the age of 33, I enrolled in a GED class. Within the second month, I had passed all the tests. I learned that it is never too late to begin a brighter future.

I now have four children in school. My oldest, Rosalinda is 18-years-old and an average student without problems; she has slipped through the school system without much notice. While in the 11th grade, she wrote a beautiful essay in which she told me how important I have been as an example for her; she knows how important an education is to her future (see *"Why A High School Education is Important to My Future,"* page 15). A senior at Edison High School, she has received two scholarships and a grant to attend college. My 15-year-old, Monica, is a very athletic and bright student. I enrolled my younger son, Ruben Lucas (now 7 years-old), in a Head Start Program when he was four. He also attended a wonderful daycare center, where he was praised a lot. I am convinced it is because of these early experiences that he has become a bright student who loves to go to school every day.

My oldest son has not had the easy school experiences of his siblings. Daniel, now 12 years-old, has been labeled by the school as an emotionally disturbed/learning disabled child. He is hyperactive and has a condition called 'bipolar depression.' He has been pushed back and forth all year from school to school because the administrative personnel tell me they don't have the necessary resources to serve him. They tell me he needs one-to-one instruction and a small classroom setting with a lot of structure. But even in such a class, as soon as he becomes hard to handle I get called to pick him up. Many times I've asked the principal at his school to give him in-house suspension because sending Daniel home has only worsened the problem; it has taught him to act out whenever he wants to leave. With each suspension, I'm told that he is "just too difficult to handle." I truly believe that he has not learned anything academically this year, but he certainly has learned to manipulate the system: if he acts up, he knows the 'professionals' at his school will give him a two or three day vacation.

While attending one of many meetings with school personnel, I learned of one particularly disturbing incident. Daniel's fifth grade teacher told me that my son was so disruptive in class, she had put up a partition in the back of her classroom and intended to force Daniel to sit behind it for the rest of the year. After that incident he began to seriously act-up in class and was often sent home because of his behavior. Somehow, he was promoted to the 6th grade at the end of the year even though he completed very little of the 5th grade curriculum. I finally figured out the reason: if he was out of sight, he would be out of mind. He was labeled as a "difficult problem child" in elementary school, and this label has now been permanently attached. He is in the 6th grade now, working at a 3rd grade academic level. He tells me he hates school and has no desire to complete his education.

I'm frightened by the number of children who are labeled by the school system. Not every child in this country has an equal opportunity of a fair education. My son has special needs that the school system cannot seem to meet. Perhaps the school lacks the funding or the time to help Daniel, like his principal is always telling me. But even as the school system gives up on my child, I will love him deeply and will never give up on him. I will continue to fight for his right to a quality education that meets his needs and I will continue to dream that one day he will become someone as special to our community as he already is to me.

Just as I had to go to school to learn to be a better parent and role model, it took going to Daniel's school to impress upon me that I must be active in all my children's education. Policy-makers, administrators and educators have the responsibility to make information available about our rights as parents and our children's rights as students. Schools have the responsibility to make the necessary resources available to all children. We as parents must make a commitment to ourselves and to our children to learn all the responsibilities and rights we have in order to make our children's pathway through the educational system truly a path to education.

Sylvia Ortiz Valdez is a secretary in the IDRA Division of Professional Development.

"Why A High School Education is Important to My Future"

Rosalinda Valdez

A high school education is very important to me and the future I wish to have.

One reason why I want to graduate from high school is because I will be the first to finish school in my family. My mother dropped out of high school three months before graduation and my father in the sixth grade. Although, my father dropped out early even before entering junior high school, he worked to support his grandmother who raised him from birth. My mother just wanted out of school to marry my father and because her mother died. My mother has encouraged me and has been my inspiration. She has shown me the importance of completing high school and going to college. My mother has already gone back to school and has gotten her G.E.D. She says she "was lucky to find a good paying job and one she likes." In the year 1991, my mother was recognized in the Odyssey Awards and won in the category of Perseverance. This is one reason why I feel that a good education is important for my future and why I want to be like my mother.

Another reason why I think a education is important to my future is because I want to make something of myself. I want to become an accountant and know that I am not going to be stuck in a dead end job I don't like. I just want to be proud of myself, like I'm proud of my mother.

These are my two main reasons why a high school education is important to me and my future. There are many more reasons than just these two I have mentioned. I also think college is very important.

Rosalinda Valdez received her high school diploma in May, 1994.

Reclaiming Schools *- continued from page 13*

mation, supporting all relevant activities, and facilitating communication among and between organizations, groups, schools, and families.

The *Parents Reclaiming Their Schools* initiative is off to a promising start. At a recent meeting of the coalition, parents were trained in the methodology and conduct of focus-group interviews. They will put this information to work interviewing other parents who will attend a parent conference planned for June 1994. At the end of the meeting each parent participant was asked for their reaction to the training. Summing up for the group, one parent said she most appreciated that each participant was given a chance to talk and was listened to. "It's wonderful," she exclaimed, "to be asked my opinion and to know that someone is really listening!"

Aurelio M. Montemayor is Lead Trainer in the IDRA Division of Professional Development.

IDRA Staff Member Completes Term as TABE President, Says Vigilance Needed to Protect LEP Students

Adela Solís

May 31, 1994 marked the completion of work for the 1993-1994 Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE) Executive Board headed by Dr. Adela Solís, Senior Education Associate in the IDRA Division of Professional Development.

This was a year of change and expansion for TABE. Over the past year, TABE opened its new office in San Antonio, obtained 501(c)3 status, re-established communication with and training of local affiliate leaders, secured a grant for leadership development from the National Council of La Raza in a joint-venture with the National Association of Bilingual Education, and continued the process of constitutional revision begun in 1992-1993. In the Fall, TABE joined other organizations in efforts to make the state assessment program more responsive to the needs of limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. "The State Board ruling exempting LEP students from the English TAAS and the plan to develop and administer a Spanish TAAS are among the major accomplishments of 1994," asserts Dr. Solís. "As we move into the new year, however, we must continue to monitor congressional action on the reauthorization of the ESEA, as well as all state policy trends that threaten the rights of LEP students to appropriate education."

New TABE President Dr. Nancy Ramos of Southwest Texas State University and the 1994-1995 Executive Board begin work this month. "I wish them the best in their new roles within TABE," says Dr. Solís. "The organization must play a vital role in improving educational opportunity for students in Texas and I'm confident the new leadership is up to challenges that lie ahead."

Dr. Joe J. Bernal, 1993-1994 Legislative Co-Chair for TABE, was recently elected to the Executive Board of the National Association for Bilingual Education. Dr. Bernal will be the Representative for States in NABE's Central Region.

Dispelling Misconceptions - continued from page 4

across the nation have the highest dropout rate in secondary schools. When then-Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos told them they should look at the low priority Hispanic parents put on education, he was booed roundly. They put all the blame on "the system" and discrimination and none on themselves. They, too, are crybabies. [8]

This portrayal of Hispanic parents as irresponsible whiners is carried even further by 1990 articles in *Time* and *Newsweek*:

Some of the bitterest clashes have taken place in schools where Hispanic-dominated councils have ejected non-Hispanic principals, leading disgruntled parents to conclude that race, not competence, was the real reason for dismissal. [9]

In the first year, [the city] managed to appoint an outstanding new superintendent only after withstanding a political backlash in a community whose patronage was more important than any one of the three Rs. [10]

These articles and others accuse Hispanic parents of preferring race politics to seeing their children attend 'good' schools. The language of these articles depicts Hispanic parents as billigerents, trouble-makers or rabble-rousers and portray only the non-minority side of each argument as legitimate. Rarely are the issues of diversity, desegregation, and educational equity that underlie the minority arguments mentioned, much less explored in any depth. Rather than basing a negative picture of Hispanic parents on thin evidence, reporters could praise the courage and commitment required of minority parents to fight for appropriate instruction and a just, equitable system for their children.

Fact: Hispanic parents do take responsibility for their children's schooling.

As the following statements from parents demonstrate, Hispanic parents take responsibility for their children's behavior and education. Far from being the shiftless trouble-makers the press depicts, Hispanic parents are willing to work within equitable schools to further the academic potential of their children:

- *"I participate with the school system to insure the best preparation for my child in the future."*
- *"I want to be advised of a problem as soon as it starts or before it gets out of hand."*
- *"We are always ready to help the teachers show our children how to behave appropriately."*
- *"I expect my children to gain a profession or learn a trade, to have a family and be happy; that they not be a problem to the school or the community."*
- *"My hope is that my children become good students, good human beings and good citizens."*
- *"Being a parent in the literal sense isn't [difficult], to be a parent in the right way...involves educating, training, and teaching our children the road to a good living for them and for the society in which they are part."*

Myth: Hispanic parents cannot educate their children.

Finally, one of the most pervasive misconceptions about Hispanic parents has an unlikely basis: early childhood education (ECE). As non-minority educators and politicians increase support for ECE programs, a particularly damaging myth has arisen: "Schools have to capture minority kids before they reach the age of five or their parents will ruin their educational opportunities for life."

This myth is perpetuated in a 1990 *Newsweek* article by reporter Mark Starr about a university-run ECE program to be established in a largely-Hispanic neighborhood:

Without the preschool program, the [university] deans concede, [the city] is unlikely to become a national model; in fact, though no one ever suggested this publicly, it might not warrant 10 years of the university's full-time attention. "If we're not going to be able to get those kids from birth through five years old," said [a university spokesperson] "we're just treading water." [11]

The university perpetuates the misconceptions surrounding minority students and parents. The university spokesperson's saying that the program is "just treading water" unless it reaches children younger than five implies that the parents cannot prepare their children for school. This assumes that only the non-minority culture can raise a child to be educable, when in fact every culture contributes to its children's learning and every child is educable when appropriate instructional methods are employed.

The reporter offers that the university might not want to spend its time, effort, or funds on a program that cannot reach pre-kindergarten children, since the university personnel feel they would be "just treading water" with older students. Through statements like this, another myth takes shape: it is not cost effective to improve educational opportunity for minority children over age five.

Barbara Dafoe Whitehead addresses the media's representation of parents as uncaring, ignorant, selfish, and even brutal in her 1990 article "Where Have All the Parents Gone?" She argues that parents have lost cultural clout due to this portrayal and economic power due to rising costs in our often tenuous economy. Dafoe Whitehead sums up how the inclusion of *any* parents in education is ignored in many educational reform discussions:

Declining demographically, hard-pressed economically and disarrayed politically, parents have become 'part of the problem'....the logic is clear: Why try to help parents - an increasingly marginal and unsympathetic bunch - when you can rescue their children? [12]

It should be noted that although Dafoe Whitehead argues that many proponents of educational reform focus on children rather than their parents, Mark Starr's *Newsweek* article signals that even the children themselves lose the privileged status of the "salvageable" beyond the age of five.

Fact: Hispanic parents do know how to help their children.

The following advice from Hispanic parents to other parents, collected for IDRA's *Families in Schools: Parents' Dialogues Towards Student Success/Familias en las Escuelas: Un Dialogo Entre Padres Acerca del Éxito de los Estudiantes* publication, demonstrates how much they value their children and how far they will go to help their children fulfill their potential. Instead of discarding minority cultures as excess -

Dispelling Misconceptions - continued on page 17

Kreyche, Gerald F., 1991, p. 57
Tifft, Susan E., 1990, p. 73
Starr, Mark, 1990, p. 60
Starr, Mark, 1990, p. 63
Dafoe Whitehead, Barbara, 1990, p. 34

Dispelling Misconceptions *- continued from page 16*

even detrimental - baggage, schools should build on the unique lessons taught by various cultures by providing sensitive and appropriate instruction.

"Help your child feel confident and talk to him about his fears and his problems."

"Help your children choose good friends; be good citizens and have a desire to be a better person."

"Tell your children to get a proper education that will help [them] *have a successful life and be a good example with proper moral standards with the help and teaching of God."*

"Our children are our future. We can only try to mold and shape [them], but every butterfly emerges differently from the cocoon. You choose your direction; we (the shapers) are always there to support them."

Conclusions

I hope that you can learn from my mistakes... We're not perfect; we all make mistakes and we all make our own decisions. We all hope that we make the right decisions in life.

As this Hispanic parent points out, "We all hope that we make the right decisions in life." However, making the right decisions, or the best ones, requires that we have a sufficient information base and breadth of knowledge. Although we live in the Information Age, the most accessible media do not provide all the information we may need. With little time or resources to explore other avenues, too many of us make decisions and judgments based on incomplete or inaccurate information.

When the popular media repeats misinformation about minority families, for example, taxpayers can feel justified in rejecting taxation to support public schools. On the one hand, people may believe that they need not pay for public education because some parents do not care if their children receive an education at all. "How can benefits of public education accrue when parents do not reinforce its importance at home?" they ask. On the other hand, they may not support public schools because they have been told mistakenly that minority communities themselves refuse to accept fiscal responsibility for education.

In order to make responsible decisions, we owe it to ourselves to seek alternate sources of information when the popular media fail us. We also can offer the knowledge or resources that we possess to counter misconceptions and myths perpetuated in the media; our relationship to media does not have to consist of mere reception. The books from which the parents' comments were taken are only two of the innumerable resources that counter myths about Hispanic parents; the parents themselves and their children offer many more.

Ultimately, incorporating the facts about minority cultures can create tolerance and understanding. Endeavoring to inform ourselves and others so that all of us will make more completely reasoned judgments about what ultimately affects all of us - public schools, public education, and therefore, the US economy - just makes sense.

Resources

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Mikki Symonds is a Research Assistant in the IDRA Division of Research and Evaluation.

Playtime Is Science *- continued from page 9*

Based on the success of the local NYC model, *Playtime Is Science* is currently being disseminated nationally. A three-year pilot is now in place at pilot sites across the country including Oklahoma (the Cherokee Nation), Texas, and Arkansas. Also being piloted is a unique national training and implementation network, which is being set up in partnership with federally-funded regional Desegregation Assistance Centers including the IDRA Desegregation Assistance Center - South Central Collaborative.

Objectives for disseminating the program nationally are:

1. To pilot test *Playtime Is Science* in schools and community-based organizations in each of the four pilot sites;
2. To develop and field-test additional printed materials and video tapes, building on those developed for the local model;
3. To conduct research on outcomes for children; and
4. To create regional training and implementation networks.

The IDRA DAC is working with *Playtime Is Science* implementation sites across the Southwest. Over the past six months, IDRA staff have also presented the curriculum at the annual conference of the San Antonio Alliance for Education in San Antonio, Texas, the 11th Annual Conference on Multicultural Education at the University of Central Oklahoma, and the Oklahoma Annual Bilingual/Title VII Conference. Over the coming months, the IDRA DAC will continue to participate in the *Playtime Is Science* national dissemination efforts.

For more information about *Playtime Is Science*, contact the IDRA DAC-SCC at 210/684-8180.

Bradley Scott is a Senior Education Associate in the IDRA Division of Educational Equity and a coordinator for the IDRA Desegregation Assistance Center - South-Central Collaborative.

The *Playtime Is Science* National Funders

American Express Philanthropic Program • DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund • Aaron Diamond Foundation • Greenwall Foundation • The Heckscher Foundation for Children • Morgan Guaranty Trust Company • National Science Foundation • New York Community Trust • Pfizer Inc. • Toyota USA Foundation

RESOURCES ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

ADDITIONAL READINGS AND INFORMATION

SPIRITUAL ENERGY
BRINGS COMPASSION
INTO THE REAL WORLD.
WITH COMPASSION,
WE SEE BENEVOLENTLY
OUR OWN HUMAN CONDITION
AND THE CONDITION OF
OUR FELLOW BEINGS.
WE DROP PREJUDICE.
WE WITHHOLD JUDGMENT.
- Christina Baldwin,
writer and educator, in
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Titles in bold are available from IDRA at no cost.
Contact IDRA's Communications Manager to obtain reprints. Thank you.

IDRA WORKSHOPS

To request further information on these or other training and technical assistance topics, please contact IDRA at 210/684-8180.

WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS

Maneras de Apoyar el Exito Escolar de Su Hijo(a)/Ways of Supporting Your Child's Educational Success

This workshop will help parents examine ways in which they can make a difference in their children's academic success. Participants will be provided with an overview of the public education system and their rights as parents within the system. Participants will also develop skills for conducting effective parent-teacher conferences and reinforcing learning at home.

Identifying Problems, Assisting Your Child in Resolving Them, and Understanding Discipline Management Techniques

A thought-provoking session aimed at providing new parenting techniques and skills, this workshop helps parents discover new avenues for communicating with and understanding their children. It includes alternatives to corporal punishment and strategies parents can use to build their youngsters' self-esteem and confidence.

WORKSHOPS FOR EDUCATORS

Effective Techniques for Involving Parents of Chapter 1 Students in the Instructional Process

This practical workshop is designed to provide teachers with ideas to involve parents in the instructional process. Topics covered include how parents can become resources for the classroom, how parents can be gently encouraged to provide educators with useful information about their children, and how parents can become the teacher's partners in their children's education. Special attention is paid to training participants in positive, inclusive methods for working with Chapter 1 parents including culture-appropriate home-contacts and overcoming language differences for effective communication.

Teaching Parenting Skills, Techniques, and Methods to Reinforce Classroom Instructional Objectives at Home

This workshop provides teachers with the skills they need to help parents find new ways of working with their children for the express purpose of improving students' classroom performance. Focusing on the positive, participants will discover cultural and other barriers that may affect parents' involvement in their children's education and methods teachers can use to invite parent-student interactions in the classroom and at home.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM IDRA

***The following publications are available from IDRA** at the listed price; there is no additional charge for shipping and handling. Publication orders should be directed to Communications Manager, IDRA, 5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350, San Antonio, TX 78228. It is IDRA policy that all orders totaling less than $30 be pre-paid. Thank you.*

HISPANIC FAMILIES AS VALUED PARTNERS: AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., Aurora Gallagher, Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed., Abelardo Villarreal, Ph.D., Ninta Adame-Reyna, M.S., and Josie D. Supik, M.A.

This publication explores the role of Hispanic families, particularly parents, in American education. Through a presentation of facts about Hispanics in the U.S. and an honest discussion of Hispanic cultural values and mores, the authors dispel the myths that many educators have about their Hispanic students' families. Most importantly, the book focuses on the common ground shared by schools and Hispanic homes - most notably that education is important. It seeks to show administrators and teachers the value of family participation in education. Instructions and worksheets for implementing a parental involvement program tailored to the needs of Hispanic families and a comprehensive resources list are also provided.

90 Pages, Illustrated; $19.95

1993 First Edition; Quality Paperback; ISBN #1-878550-47-0.

FAMILIES IN SCHOOLS: PARENTS' DIALOGUES TOWARDS STUDENT SUCCESS/ FAMILIAS EN LAS ESCUELAS: UN DÍALOGO ENTRE PADRES ACERCA DEL EXITO DE LOS ESTUDIANTES

by María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., and IDRA staff

This publication is a testament to parents' convictions and determination that their children will have a better life than they have had, and a testament to parents' willingness to become partners with the schools to improve educational outcomes for their children. Families in Schools/Familias en las Escuelas contains quotes and drawings culled from interviews and work sessions with hundreds of Texas minority parents.

26 Pages; $4.50

1993; Paperback; No ISBN.

VALUED YOUTH ANTHOLOGY: ARTICLES ON DROPOUT PREVENTION

by Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed. (Editor)

This publication gathers 33 *IDRA Newsletter* articles on dropout prevention from 1986 to 1989. Authored by various IDRA staff members and other professional educators, these articles provide a multi-faceted look at many of the issues surrounding the education of at-risk youth. Topics range from the history of the dropout problem in Texas to effective strategies for reversing the trend, from multiculturalism to parental involvement. Also included are a brief description of each article and a keyword index to the entire collection.

108 Pages; $5.00

1989 First Edition; Paperback; ISBN #1-878550-27-6.

THOROUGH AND FAIR: CREATING ROUTES TO SUCCESS FOR MEXICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS

by Alicia Sosa, Ph.D.

This book describes educators' roles and responsibilities in relation to a growing Mexican American population. Dr. Sosa explains why providing bilingual education, while essential, is not enough. Details of Hispanic educational attainment levels and information about current issues in the education of minority students are provided, as are a current list of the national Desegregation Assistance Centers and an extensive bibliography of resources on minority education issues.

64 Pages; ERIC; $10.00

1993 First Edition; Quality Paperback; ISBN #1-880785-10-2.

THE UNDEREDUCATION OF AMERICAN YOUTH

by José A. Cárdenas, Ed.D., María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., and Dorothy Waggoner, Ph.D.

The undereducation rate, the proportion of youth ages 16 to 24 not enrolled in school that have not completed twelfth grade, is on the rise. This study graphically compares White majority youth and minority youth, including White non-Hispanic youth from language minority backgrounds, on nine critical factors affecting education including racial/ethnic groups, language background, gender, poverty level and status in the work force. With trend data through 1985, the undereducation rates of six ethnic groups by state are presented with a running text highlighting the factors involved in creating a whole class of undereducated citizens.

24 Pages, Illustrated; $6.00

1988 First Edition; Quality Paperback; ISBN #1-878550-02-0.

SCHEDULE OF IDRA TRAINING AND WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

JUNE 1 - JUNE 30, 1994

DATE	SCHOOL DISTRICT/AGENCY	TOPIC
June 1	Community School District 10, NY	Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program (VYP) Case Study
June 2	Community School District 10, NY	Coca-Cola VYP End-Of-Year Event
	Education Service Center (ESC) - Region 5	Instructional Strategies for the English as a Second Language (ESL) Classroom
June 3	Community School District 10, NY	Coca-Cola VYP Third Implementation
	ESC - Region 5	Using the Whole Language Approval with Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students
	ESC - Region 7	ESL Sheltered Instruction
June 6	Pearsall Independent School District (ISD)	Literature-Based Instruction
June 7	Ector County ISD	Literature-Based Instruction
June 7-8	Urbana Public Schools	Alternative Assessment
June 9	ESC - Region 15	Using ESL Techniques to Address TAAS Objectives
	Fort Worth ISD	Coca-Cola VYP End-Of-Year Event
June 13	El Paso ISD	Portfolio Assessment
June 13-17	Brownsville ISD	Coca-Cola VYP Leadership Development for Future Mentors
June 15	The Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education (TACHE) Conference	Leadership Through Commitment
June 20	ESC - Region 15	Pathways - Reading
June 22-24	Brownsville ISD	Coca-Cola VYP Teacher/Mentor Coordinators Teacher Leadership Development
June 23	Santa Monica Unified School District, CA	Coca-Cola VYP Third Implementation
June 24	Santa Monica Unified School District, CA	Coca-Cola VYP End-Of-Year Event
June 27	*Centro Para El Estudio De Libros Infantiles*	Children Literature Workshops
	Arch Ford Education Co-op	Multicultural/Sex/Fair and Reading Comprehensive

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